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FY2008 Cochran Success Story

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Report Highlights:

As a result of Cochran training, the Center for Exports and Investment has been able to train through seminars, market reports, tradeshow, publications and its web portal over 100,000 information users interested in trading with the US.

General Information:

Center of Exports and Investment Inaugurates New Building and Expands its Services to over 100,000 Users

The [Center for Exports and Investment](#) (CEI) of Nicaragua inaugurated its new building on February 5, 2010. This new facility represents a significant accomplishment for CEI, Nicaraguan producers, exporters, importers and users of market intelligence.

CEI is a non-profit private enterprise that supports small and medium enterprises and producers to improve business competitiveness and allow access to international markets. CEI's board of directors is composed of members from the private and public sector.

"I have used key market and technical information learned while attending [Cochran](#) training in the US. This information has facilitated the establishment of new procedures that allow producers to increase their exports and imports to the most important market for Nicaragua, the US," said [Cochran](#) Alumnus, Roberto Brenes, CEI Executive Director.

In 2008, five Cochran fellows from Nicaraguan (4) and Costa Rica (1) received training on "Trading Opportunities: CAFTA-DR – US." The program was intended to build trade capacity between Central American countries and the US. The training focused on import regulations, WTO policies, food safety, good manufacturing practices, hazard analysis and critical control points, SPS measures, traceability, market demand for niche products, and techniques to identify trade opportunities.

As a result of Cochran training, CEI has been able to train through seminars, market reports, tradeshows, publications and through its web portal over 100,000 information users interested in trading with the US. The increasing number of producers, exporters and importers seeking market intelligence services motivated CEI to move to the facility.

On the same day of inauguration, CEI signed a collaboration agreement with the [Millennium Challenge Corporation](#) (MCC). Through this agreement, 5,000 additional producers of a wide range of goods including honey, dairy products, plantain, yucca, red beans, sesame seed, cashew nuts and horticultural products from the States of León and Chinandega will receive market access intelligence, quality management and selection of export niches through CEI's services. CEI will also register MCC beneficiary cooperatives and producers with the [World Trade Point Federation](#) to allow access to information on market access and membership with this trade organization.

CEI's new facilities have been designed to accommodate larger and improved office space for staff, but more importantly, the facilities have new training rooms and a library to facilitate training on market access, development of business plans, sharing of market intelligence, agro-tourism promotion, and international alliances, among others.



Mr. Roberto Brenes, CEI Executive Director



CEI Staff posing at the newly inaugurated building